Distance Learning Overview

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Distance Learning Overview

Overview of Presentation:

- Definition of Distance Learning
- Technologies used for Distance Learning
- Other Distance Learning Issues
- Questions

Distance Learning Overview

Definition:

Structured learning events in which the instructor and the learner are separated in time and/or space, and communication between them is facilitated by some form or forms of technology

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Basic Defining Elements:

- Separation of instructor and learner - distinguishes it from face-to-face instruction

- Influence of an educational organization - distinguishes it from private study

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Basic Defining Elements:

- Use of technology - carries instruction as well as uniting learner and instructor

- Provision for two-way communication so students may initiate or benefit from dialogue

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Basic Defining Elements:

- Possibility of occasional meetings for both educational/training and socialization purposes

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Types of Technologies:

- Synchronous - live, in-the-moment interaction

- Asynchronous - delayed interaction

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Synchronous Technologies:

- Live, in-the-moment interaction

- Many are similar to classroom instruction

- Scheduled like classroom instruction

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Types of Synchronous Technologies:

- Computer Conferencing (Real Time)
- Audio Teletraining
- Audio Graphics
- Interactive Video Teletraining (1-way video)
- Video Teleconferencing (2-way video)

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Audio Teletraining:

Strengths:

- Very inexpensive
- Easy to set up
- Minimal training on equipment
- Use existing phone lines

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Audio Teletraining:

Weaknesses:

- Not appropriate for training requiring live or interactive video

- Requires pre-distribution of visual materials

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Audiographic Conferencing:

Strengths:

- Very inexpensive
- Easy to set up
- Ability to share graphics (charts, graphs, photographs, etc.)
- Whiteboard capability

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Audiographic Conferencing:

Weaknesses:

- Not appropriate for training requiring live or interactive video
- May require pre-distribution of computer files
- Requires some degree of computer literacy to develop course materials

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Computer Conferencing (Real Time):

Strengths:

- Very inexpensive
- Easy to set up
- Minimal training on equipment
- Use existing networks

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Computer Conferencing (Real Time):

Weaknesses:

- Not appropriate for training requiring live or interactive video

- Incompatible computers/software may require pre-distribution of visual materials

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Interactive Video Teletraining:

Strengths:

- Transmits live video and audio
- Cost effective (medium & large audiences)
- Widespread availability of receive facilities
- Response systems can increase interactivity

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Interactive Video Teletraining:

Weaknesses:

- Requires a lot of equipment to broadcast signal
- May require installation or rental of satellite receive dishes
- Requires thorough training on equipment at receive sites

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Video Teleconferencing:

Strengths:

- Allows the instructor to see the learners
- Allows for multiple "instructor" sites
- Allows learners to interact visually with each other

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Video Teleconferencing:

Weaknesses:

- High transmission costs
- High equipment costs for each site
- Difficult to manage visual interaction with multiple sites
- Many systems are "voice activitated" for visual control

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Asynchronous Technologies:

- Delayed interaction

- "Anytime & Anywhere"

- Mostly self-paced instruction

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Types of Asynchronous Technologies:

- Computer Based Training (CD-Rom)
- On-Line Training (Internet & Intranet)

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Computer Based Training:

Sterngths:

- Self-paced
- Branching based on individual answers
- Testing and evaluation
- Use of graphics, motion, video and sound
- Use of existing video tapes and graphics
- Inexpensive distribution costs

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Computer Based Training:

Weaknesses:

- High costs for development
- Long development and revision times
- Moderate computer literacy skills required by learners

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Internet & Intranet Training:

Strengths:

- Self-paced
- Materials easily updated
- Access other sources real time
- Access multiple courses
- Inexpensive distribution costs

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Internet & Intranet Training:

Weaknesses:

- Moderate to high computer literacy skills needed to create Web-based training sites
- Video and sound use limited
- Security measures needed to stop unwanted users and hackers

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Which Technology is the "BEST?"

- It Depends…
- Your Specific Application
- Your Previous Technology Investments
- Your Ability to Develop and Support

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Summary:

- Distance learning is not a panacea
- There is no one "best" technology
- Mixed technology approaches are generally preferred to a single technology
- Application(s) should determine technology